

DETAILED ACTION

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Alan Kasper on October 11, 2011.

The application has been amended as follows:

The Abstract has been amended as follows:

~~The present invention relates to a method of manufacturing with high production efficiency glass articles, such as high-quality preforms for press molding (press-molding preforms) from glass melt, and to a method of manufacturing glass elements, such as lenses, by press molding these preforms. Further, the present invention relates to a method of molding glass gobs suited to the press molding of preforms of high quality and high weight precision from a glass melt, and to a method of, and manufacturing optical elements by reheating and press molding these glass gobs. In the method of manufacturing glass articles, glass gobs are continuously separated from a glass melt flow continuously flowing out of a nozzle and the separated glass gobs are formed with glass forming members that are intermittently or continuously moving. In the method, a support member is made to approach the front end of the nozzle, the front end of the glass melt flow is received by the support member, and the support member is dropped more rapidly than the rate of flow of the glass melt flow to separate a glass gob from the glass melt flow. The [[: the]] separated glass gob is transferred from the support member to a stopped or moving glass forming member to mold a glass article, and in the case where the glass gob is moved to a stopped glass forming member, the period during which the glass forming member is stopped for transfer of the glass gob from the support member to the glass forming member is made shorter than the period required for one cycle of preparing one glass glob from the glass melt flow using the support member and moving the glass gob to the glass forming member.~~

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-15 and 17-26 are allowed.

The United States patents to Howard (US 1,853,002) and Ikeuchi (US 5,738,701) and the United States patent application publication to Yoshikuni (US 2003/0000252A1) constitute the closest related art of record. In accordance with the decision by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences dated June 24, 2011 (see particularly pages 4-6), the noted references fail to render a prima facie case of obviousness for the claimed invention as set forth in Claims 1-15 and 17-26.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JASON L. LAZORCIK whose telephone number is (571)272-2217. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Matthew Daniels can be reached on (571) 272-2450. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/JASON L LAZORCIK/
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